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Botanical Notes.

The True "Rattlesnake Master" appears to be *Agave Virginica*, L., and not *Eryngium aquaticum*, L., (= *E. yuccæfolium*, Michx.). Gray gives the name to the latter plant, but neither Wood nor Chapman recognizes it at all. A very intelligent correspondent in East Tennessee assures me that the *Agave* (fully identified from specimens sent) is the genuine "Rattlesnake Master." He says: "My experience is this: Take a stick, get a rattlesnake 'mad,' and it will strike the stick as viciously as it would a man. But rub the root of this plant on the end of the stick and put it to the snake's head, and it will run or drop its head as low as possible, and not attempt to strike the stick. I have tried several snakes of the rattler kind, and never could induce one to bite or snap at a stick with this weed rubbed on it." The *Eryngium*, common in the same region, is called "Crow Poison," and is not associated with the rattlesnake in any way in popular estimation. E. E. S.

Urechites suberecta, Muell. An experimental research by Dr. Minkiewicz. (Therap. Gaz., p. 514.) A brief resumé of our knowledge of the physiological action of this plant, from which the doctor concludes that its properties cannot be utilized in medicine. We remember that the same conclusion was reached some years ago concerning "Jaborandi," which has now become one of our important drugs. The same result may yet be reached in the case of *Urechites*. In the article in question the plant, an Apocynacea, is referred to the Asclepiadaceæ.

The "Loco-weeds" of our southwestern region have been still further examined by a Mr. Kennedy, who reports (Pharm. Rec., July 2) that he fails to find any constituent capable of producing toxic effects.

Vernonia Nigritiana. A fresh instance of the remarkable and inexplicable diversity of physiological effects produced by the Compositæ is afforded by the discovery in *Vernonia Nigritiana*, Oliver & Hirn, of Western Africa, of a glucoside which acts similarly to digitalis.

Cineraria maritima, Willd. From the reports of Dr. A. Mer-

cer, formerly connected with the Colonial Hospital, Port of Spain, some hopes are gathered that the fresh juice of the *Cineraria maritima*, Willd., may be found to possess the power of causing the absorption of cataract. H. H. R.

Native Flowers of New Zealand illustrated in colors. By Mrs. Charles Hetley. Although not intended as a botanical contribution, the drawings reproduced in these portfolios are true to nature, and include several plants new to the flora of New Zealand. The work has been carefully supervised by native botanists and each plate is accompanied by a short description; it was also intended to give a botanical dissection of the flower in each, but for some reason these have been omitted. Three parts have already appeared, each containing twelve chromolithographs, large quarto size, at the price of £3 3s. If a sufficient number of copies are sold the work will be continued. A specimen of the plates will be forwarded free on application to the publishers, Sampson Low, Marston & Co., London.

Review of Foreign Literature.

An attempt to answer the question, whether the freezing of the seed influences the development of the plant afterward developing from the same. By L. Kny. (Sitzungsbericht der Gesellschaft Naturforschende Freunde zu Berlin vom 15 Novemb. 1887.)

One of the most marked characteristics of the vegetation of cold climates is the extreme rapidity of its growth, both vegetative and reproductive. Grisebach says that the polar willow, when its shoots are only about one inch long, begins to blossom, and this weeks before the sap begins its upward streaming. Christ says, however much the climate of the Alps excites rapid development of vegetation, plants growing lower down on the sides of the Alps show the same propensity, but with this difference: those of any species above blossom earlier than those of the same species growing lower down, although the latter develop their leaves earlier. He considers this due to increased insolation. Several other authors refer this, not to any direct influence during the time of development, but rather to the influence of extreme cold on perennial plants during the winter